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ABSTRACT

This topical paper discusses a proposal for a student volunteer agency operating with or under the auspices of a college, but as an alternative to a comprehensive community college education. Because of conflicting expectations and inadequate resources, the idea of a year off is seen as an option to obligatory college attendance. Volunteers can be: students already enrolled in human service paraprofessional programs, other junior college students, junior college drop-outs, or young people who never enrolled in college. The size of the community would determine the size of the agency. The staff would come from a variety of backgrounds and would handle registration, placement, counseling, training and evaluation of volunteers, and would act as public relations men with the community. Such a proposal would allow youth to try satisfying, interesting work under some supervision and to feel a part of, and relate their education to, their community. The community would gain the advantage of students working on solutions to social problems and filling shortages in service personnel. The advantages to the community college and faculty are many: the scope of on-campus student personnel services could be reduced to those directly related to students; the volunteer work could be the experience requirement for human services programs; and the agency could be the specific arm of the junior college community service commitment without consuming budget and staff. (CA)

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A STUDENT VOLUNTEER SERVICES BUREAU

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JC 710 218

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TOPICAL PAPERS

1. A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education. July 1968. Out of print. ED 022 479.

2. A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education; Number 2: Attitude Assessment. November 1968. Out of print. ED 026 050.

3. Student Activism and the Junior College Administrator: Judicial Guidelines. December 1968.

4. Students as Teachers. January 1969.

5. Is Anyone Learning to Write? February 1969.

6. Is It Really a Better Technique? March 1969. Out of print. ED 030 410.

7. A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education; Number 3: Concept Formation. August 1969. Out of print. ED 032 072.

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FOREWORD

Comprehensiveness or distinctiveness? What is the future of the community college? The Carnegie Commission recommends that 230 to 280 new community colleges be established in the next ten years. Must they all look alike?

This Topical Paper is the first in a series outlining alternatives to the comprehensive community college, the institution that attempts to perform all tasks under the same roof. In the Paper, Leslie Purdy, a student in the UCLA Graduate School of Education details the organization of a bureau that would capitalize on the tendencies of young people to serve their community. This would be a distinctive service operating in conjunction with, or under the auspices of, a community college.

Other papers planned for this series include details of different institutions that would parcel out some other functions of the comprehensive colleges for direct focus. We believe there are--or should be--alternatives to the all-encompassing two-year college.

Arthur M. Cohen
Principal Investigator and Director
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A STUDENT VOLUNTEER SERVICES BUREAU

I. Introduction

Universal higher education is gradually becoming accepted as a widespread, if not national, commitment of American society today. It is seen as one viable--and tenable--solution to social problems, an answer to the demands of minority groups for equal opportunity, and an attempt to put into action our concept of democracy. While of recent vintage, the ideal is being fairly rapidly realized. In 1959, California made a commitment to provide higher education opportunities for all its high school graduates. More recently, the City University of New York opened its doors to all city residents, regardless of previous school records. Some fifteen states have adopted hierarchical higher education systems [39] . Because they have lower entrance requirements and fees than the other schools, community colleges are the keystones to these systems. Approximately 40 per cent of all first-year college students in the country are in community junior colleges. This figure is growing annually as more junior colleges open their doors and as entrance to four-year colleges and universities becomes more difficult. The junior colleges, pressured to accept the responsibility for educating more students and to educate them in a greater number of ways, will thus be the first to consider whether 14 years of schooling, rather than 12, is universally desirable and/or possible.

This expansion of institutions and students alike is not without problems. The public may accept the ideal of universal higher education on theoretical grounds, but it is showing less and less inclination to provide financial support for the goal. This clash between the demand for what higher education offers--skills, status, and adolescent community centers--and the resources available for higher education, makes it necessary to reconsider the desirability of such mass education and to begin studying some alternatives.

The disenchantment evident in society's resistance to support for higher education is matched by the general dissatisfaction of students with the schooling they presently receive. The various demands and complaints of students suggest, in part, that organized schooling beyond the twelfth year is serving an increasingly apathetic or even resisting audience. Going on to college has become almost as automatic as attending elementary and secondary school, an expectation implying a lack of autonomy that breeds dissatisfaction. Cohen and Brawer [10] summarize the current debate over the involuntariness of attending college by saying:

> The argument that the college is an instrument of social mobility loses much of its force when a majority of the high school graduates go on to college because they have nowhere else to go. Dropping out of the

> mainstream of schooling is not easy. Von Hoffman (1970) speaks of "a vast social conspiracy to force a kid onto welfare, into the Army or back to school!" And Jerome (1969) points out that "college education has become, *de facto*, compulsory." Why are they there? Where else can a young person go? (p. 99)

It is not only from the student's point of view that further schooling at the end of high school may be undesirable. Administrators and teachers complain about the lack of preparation and maturity of the young people who demand entrance into college. Not all of these vociferous students are ready to undertake serious academic study immediately upon high school graduation. Others do not necessarily want further schooling, yet college is their most attractive, if not their only, option because they want to be with others of their same age, want to put off making what may possibly be permanently binding decisions about vocations, like the social opportunities of the college campus, and don't want to be drafted.

Thus, higher education is caught in a situation of conflicting expectations and inadequate resources. At a time when universal higher education is seen as a panacea to social problems, critics of current higher education say that it is not only impossible financially but may also have such undesirable consequences as failing to recognize the needs of many young people for socially acceptable alternatives. What, then, are available options? What are the alternatives for high school graduates? Which adolescent characteristics make alternatives necessary?

The Need For Options

Many writers have noted the contrast between the interests of youth and the conditions of college attendance. They observe that young people are often intensely idealistic, want opportunities for involvement in solutions to social problems, seek relationships with other people, and demand immediate results from their activities. In contrast, college requires deferred gratification of goals and ideals, whether personal or vocational, aims to develop cognitive rather than affective skills, and provides little opportunity for the student to test his ability to take responsibility. Katz [21] notes that students press for extracurricular activities that provide an opportunity for them to show their social concerns, to help the underprivileged, or to further campaigns for civil rights and ecology. Keniston [22] says that students want time to try out their solutions to these problems without academic penalty, even if not for academic credit. Accordingly, students on campuses all over the country have tried to bend the curriculum and the extracurriculum to permit expression of social awareness.

Other observers suggest that students need a kind of "year off" after high school, an indefinite time to assess opportunities and to gain experiences to help them make decisions about their future. If they subsequently decide to go to college, they will be more mature and purposeful students.

The creation of alternatives to schooling for the high school graduate has been recommended by such prestigious groups as the Carnegie Commission [6], the Assembly on University Goals and Governance [1], and the Report on Higher Education ("Newman Report") [29]. This proposal is scarcely realistic at present because few socially sanctioned opportunities for education and experience exist other than within the colleges and universities. Society has given the schools, including the junior colleges, the total responsibility for job training, general education, custody until adulthood, any necessary counseling, and even entertainment, yet now we hear the recommendation that "upon completion of secondary school, the young should have a great variety of interesting alternatives available to them, of which immediate entry into college would be only one" [13:98]. What could some of these "alternatives" be?

One solution to the problem of involuntary college attendance would be to increase such options as credit by examination, adult education opportunities, credit for education while in military service, and improved extension programs. At least two agencies have reviewed these possibilities in depth: the College Entrance Examination Board report on "Credit by Examination for College Level Studies" [14] and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education report, "College Credit for Off-Campus Study" [31]. Increasing the ways one can earn the BA or BS degree at any time in his life might reduce the "now or never" pressure on high school graduates to go directly on to college, but they do not begin to solve the problem of serving various adolescent needs. Some of these, such as the desire for active social involvement, seem actually antithetical to the educational purposes of colleges.

This paper will explore the idea of a year off as an option for young people. A new community-based agency is proposed to provide opportunities for fulfilling at least one of the expressed needs of young people today--that of desire to help others and, in the process, explore their own personality and skills. Considering that there is little in present society in the way of meaningful work or experiences for young people, unless some viable alternatives are created, we have little reason to encourage students to postpone entrance into college.

Furthermore, while it may be desirable for colleges to continue offering many services for youth, it should not be necessary for all young people to continue in school to profit from them. In other words, the trend should be away from making

the junior college the societal clearinghouse for all 17-year-olds, counseling and preparing them for jobs, further academic work, or home and marriage.

II. A Volunteer Bureau

The proposal offered here is that a volunteer bureau or agency provide an outlet for youthful idealism. Though it would be affiliated with a junior college, it would not itself grant degrees. This agency would be, in effect, a clearinghouse for all types of available volunteer work, both in the local community and in the nation. Not only would it keep an up-to-date listing of opportunities, but agency staff would also handle some of the necessary training for the work, whether a simple, one-day orientation for teachers' aides, or the three-month, in-depth training for VISTA or Peace Corps. Staff from the agency would supervise and counsel volunteers and write a brief description of their work when the job was completed or the volunteers resigned. The agency would also work with employers using volunteers and with the local community to work on community projects.

Volunteer agencies already exist in our larger cities. Some are managed by highly experienced personnel; others are small offices with limited activities and staff. Along with a growing literature on volunteer work, social scientists predict a growing need for and use of volunteer services. The problem is that these agencies typically attract few young people; volunteers often are white, middle-class women, engaging in society-page charity work [30]. Agencies engaged in the more controversial work that appeals to the young are too small or underfunded to attract and handle many of them.

Consequently, some colleges have tended to establish their own volunteer centers under the leadership of the student personnel staff and student government rather than to encourage students to use the local community volunteer center. Many of these college volunteer organizations have become quite extensive. Student personnel administrators help find work for students off campus, and counsel and supervise them. UCLA, for example, has a Community Service Commission, modeled after a similar program at Harvard, which has found positions for several hundred students a year. The UCLA Commission published a catalog of service opportunities listing approximately 300 agencies that can use volunteers [37]. Some participants in these extracurricular activities receive credit for part of the work, but most do not. Junior Colleges, such as Golden West in Huntington Beach, California, and Staten Island in New York, have also set up extensive extracurricular programs that involve students in social work in the local communities [16;25]. Students have been helped to find summer volunteer work through such listings of jobs as Invest Yourself, a manual published by the Commission on Voluntary Service and Action [19].

Other opportunities for student social work are provided within the curriculum of certain new and experimental colleges and programs. Eberly [12] gives an account of three well-developed programs: schools where students are given independent study credit for off-campus work; colleges such as Franconia College in New Hampshire that require off-campus study for one or two of the four years; and cooperative regional efforts to provide governmental summer internships. Other radical experiments, where the students' experience and work in the field are part of the curriculum, are being conducted at Friends World College and the Columbia, Maryland, campus of Antioch College [20].

By far the majority of students in higher education institutions, however, neither find such experiences included in their studies nor have the time to participate in them in the extracurriculum. Many educators question whether providing "real life" experiences for adolescents is the responsibility of colleges. However, the pressure from students for more "relevance" in their education is bound to continue. Young people whose major educational sources have been schools and television are pressing for the opportunity to experience other things for themselves and, as long as most of the high school graduates enter college without such experience, they will put pressure on the schools to permit it, whether for credit or not.

The Volunteers

A volunteer agency, located near a local community college, could combine and extend volunteer work presently handled by local volunteer agencies and college student personnel workers. Young people who came to this agency could be:

1. enrolled full-time or part-time in the junior college, seeking part-time volunteer work for their own fulfillment. The work might, though not necessarily, relate to the students' vocational interests.
2. not enrolled--perhaps junior college drop-outs. They could be employed full- or part-time in the community or be interested in some kind of volunteer work that provided basic subsistence pay as does VISTA, or the planned California Conservation Corps.
3. already in a para-professional or pre-professional "human service" program of the junior college, which has an internship or practicum as part of its degree requirements.

Thus, all young people, whether students or not, would have the opportunity to try out a wide variety of work and experience presently available only in a

limited way. Let us now deal with some of the practical details of staffing, organization, and funding of this proposed agency.

Community Relations

The size of the community would determine the size of the volunteer center. Ideally, the agency would have its own building on the periphery of a community college, with director and staff offices, where volunteers could gather for orientation sessions, news and announcements, group and individual counseling, and just for relaxation and informal discussion. The prospective volunteer would come here for information on openings. He would then fill out an application, giving previous experience (tutoring, political precinct work, newsboy, etc.), skills (typing, knowledge of a foreign language, life guard), type of work desired, times available, and such other details as need for transportation. If an opening existed and the person had never been a volunteer before, he would receive a general orientation. Specific training could occur in the center, on the job, or even in mini-classes on the campus, taught by either college faculty or community resource people. Should no openings exist of interest to the volunteer, the staff and the volunteer might work together to see if a new position could be created.

The community's social-economic conditions would also affect the types of volunteers and the types of work. The EPIC (Educational Participation in Communities) program at California State College at Los Angeles and Los Angeles City College has placed many of its students in positions dealing with urban problems, such as Head Start, ethnic community centers, family planning centers, and welfare agencies [16;12]. A volunteer center located in a region with agriculture as its economic base, on the other hand, might want volunteers for English tutoring for Mexican-Americans, running day-care centers for children of migrant workers, or aiding livestock inspection teams. Thus, the types of work done by volunteers would necessarily be influenced by the problems facing the community where the center is located.

Staff

The staff members could come from any number of backgrounds: existing volunteer bureau staff, college student personnel workers with relevant experience, social workers, Peace Corps returnees with experience in community organizing, and faculty members (perhaps on a part-time basis) experienced in setting up and supervising work study and field work training.

Training and placing volunteers is a complex job and requires varied personnel. At least one staff member must work in the community finding openings for volunteers, working with agencies who use volunteers, and reviewing the volunteer

positions in use. Part of this job is public relations, but part must also serve to insure that volunteers are being used effectively in a given position. Other staff handles registration, placement, and advising volunteers. A new volunteer might need encouragement, transportation, specific skills, or perhaps even a transfer to another position. The volunteer's interests, abilities, and previous experiences must be carefully matched with the demands of the assignment if the work is to be useful to the volunteer and to the agency. Thus, to function successfully, the center must have a full-time paid professional director and staff members. It also needs a secretarial staff, either paid or volunteer, for maintaining job descriptions and handling volunteer applications and records. Resource people to help with the in-service training could be faculty volunteers or community people familiar both with the neighborhood where the volunteer would work and with techniques helpful for the job.

Staley [32] has written an excellent summary of the steps involved in placing volunteer teacher aides in the public schools in Oregon and Washington; his observations on staff responsibility apply to any volunteer work. His survey indicated that little thought had been given to the legal and professional problems arising from the use of volunteer aides. Not knowing how best to use aides, teachers often gave them menial chores merely to keep them busy. He recommended that teachers who request aides be given short workshops to learn what services aides can perform. A blanket administrative edict to use volunteer aides will irritate teachers or any other professional and that irritation may be turned on the volunteer. Thus, Staley suggests that the staff must be sensitive to the dynamics of the interactions among employers, professionals, paraprofessionals, and volunteers.

Organization

A Board of Directors would provide overall leadership and direction in the volunteer agency and would also carry full fiscal responsibility. Members of the board would serve on a rotating basis and be broadly representative of the community. For example, it seems necessary that they represent local service agencies such as welfare, the schools, recreation, churches and synagogues, as well as the community college administration and faculty.

Funding

The financial support for most existing volunteer bureaus comes mainly from United Way or Community Chest organizations and is supplemented by donations, special drives, local charity clubs, and occasionally from a city council budget. The educational work of the new agency would make it eligible for funds from state and federal agencies. Some money would have to come from the local

community, of course, because the agency would primarily serve its needs. If a community college wanted to help establish a volunteer bureau in a town without one, aid in the form of staff and funds might be secured from the local churches and synagogues, the YMCA and YWCA, as well as from the Washington office of Volunteers of America, Inc.

A related problem facing a volunteer agency centers on how young people, who usually have little financial security, could afford to be volunteers. Some will be able to support themselves through part-time work and others will be allowed to live at home for a year or so after high school while trying out options through the volunteer services (even though parents willing to support a son or daughter through college might not feel the same toward volunteer work). To attract those from less well-to-do homes, however, the volunteer bureau ideally should be able to pay a subsistence wage for full-time work, as is already being done for VISTA work and for the alternate service performed by conscientious objectors in the military. California is now starting a conservation corps for conscientious objectors that pays room, board, and $15 a month. This will be extended to interested volunteers as soon as enough camps can be established [27:44]. If more such programs were established, many young people would be willing to commit themselves for the sake of the experience and travel they could not otherwise afford.

III. Advantages And Disadvantages

For Youth

The most obvious advantage for young people is the chance to try out some part- or full-time work, not blindly, but with supervision and counseling. The work would be tied to their interest and appropriate to their maturity and previous experience. For some young people, working as a nurse's aide might be stimulating and meaningful because of the close supervision and chance to be with other young volunteers. Others, who might want more independence and responsibility, could act as researchers, for example, for conservation groups seeking data on voting records of congressmen or as workers with minority groups in community centers. A young person could take several assignments of increasing complexity over a one-year period, be committed to a one-year assignment away from home, or come and go for short periods of time alternating with attendance at school.

Some clues to the advantages of volunteer work for young people come from the research on college student volunteers [26;2;15;5] . Some data exist that distinguish student social activists from both non-activists and political radicals. Campagna's research [5] indicates that students who do involve themselves in some

kind of service work report greater satisfaction with both their studies and themselves. University of Minnesota community volunteers tended to be upper-classmen who had above-average GPA's. A high percentage of them lived close to campus, were enrolled in social science majors, and had families that emphasized "helping" values [26]. In other words, research indicates that students who do volunteer work usually have a firm commitment to it. This is demonstrated by the fact that they make time to tutor while keeping up good grades.

The question that arises from studying these data is whether the volunteer experiences actually help them become better students or whether better and more mature students volunteer for community work. If an opportunity for community service existed, would junior college students or high school graduates who were unsure of their academic goals take advantage of it? Present data on college students indicate that only a small percentage of all of them actually volunteers. In one study, however, many supported such work verbally and indicated that, if they had had the time and the knowledge of how to join, they too would have volunteered [26].

It is logical that only the most highly motivated and organized students have felt they could take time off from school to do social service. Only the most innovative campuses presently give academic or community recognition of or reward for a student's extracurricular work. The new or weak or unsure student could not afford to take the risk of extracurricular work because it would compete with his academic work. And dropping out to travel or work has been seen as tantamount to failure for a girl and an invitation to the draft for a young man. If more significant support and guidance came from college administrators, parents, and high school staff for a young person to leave "the system" for a time, it is likely that we would see a type of youthful volunteer quite different from those reported in the literature thus far. But the research suggests that only when solidly structured and well-designed options exist, ones that do not detract from a young person's future chances, will there be volunteers from the group that presently enters the community college en masse. This leads us to look at the advantages and disadvantages of the volunteer agency for the community and for the junior college and its faculty.

For The Community

The major advantage of a volunteer agency would be that it could work on solutions to community social problems. The creation of paraprofessional programs for human service occupations in the junior college demonstrates a recognition of the great shortage of trained manpower in these fields. By 1975, some 3.5 million persons will be fully employed in service fields in this country [36], and

many more will be involved on a volunteer or part-time basis. The figure is expected to grow as the nation directs more and more of its attention to domestic problems. It will be impossible to fill these jobs with paid, college-trained personnel, partly because not enough are available and partly because the need is much greater than the funds available.

Most social planners recognize that a significant part of the manpower deficit in service occupations will have to be filled with volunteers [34]. Being a volunteer, however, does not mean the person is untrained or ill-prepared to do the job. Many volunteers have the knowledge of a paraprofessional, received through training on the job and through years of experience, but choose not to take a position as a full-time, paid employee.

Whether a young person tried volunteer work as part of a specific training program, as part of his leisure-time activities for self-development, or as a way to learn about the kind of service work he wanted to specialize in, the experience would help acquaint him with the growing and complex field of human service work. At the same time, it would help to alleviate a tremendous manpower shortage.

Are there presently enough volunteer jobs available for large numbers of young people to take advantage of this option? This question may reflect the fact that few people are aware of the many health, welfare, and recreational services that already exist. The Los Angeles County Directory of Health, Welfare, Vocational and Recreational Services [11], for example, lists them under 64 different headings. Volunteers could be placed in any of the agencies, commissions, departments, and bureaus under these headings:

Adoption
Adult Education
Services for the Aged (housing, recreation centers, etc.)
Alcoholism
Apprentice and vocational training, placement
The handicapped - deaf, blind, physically disabled, etc.
Community action groups
Community centers and settlements
Consumer education and protection
Correctional facilities
Family counseling, casework, etc.
Services for the foreign-born, immigration, naturalization
Health education

Hospitals, clinics, etc. - for mentally ill, maternity, drugs, crisis intervention, children, retardation
Housing - emergency
Industrial relations and labor law enforcement
Juvenile delinquency control and prevention
Law enforcement
Public health service and communicable disease control - veneral diseases
Race relations and intercultural groups
Recreation
Legal aid and lawyer's reference services
Missing persons
Sex education - homes for unwed mothers, abortion counseling, planned parenthood
Servicemen and women, veterans organizations and services
Small business development
Tutorial services
Urban renewal
Youth services - Big Brothers, clubs, Head Start, etc.

This list shows that city, county, state, and federal government as well as religious groups, special interest groups, and private businesses are in the human service business. It also shows that these services are not offered for any one particular class, race, or subgroup; everyone at some time will use a public service. But these are not the only areas where volunteers could be used; there are at least two other broad areas that will need personnel of all kinds--communications (libraries, cable TV, and other media), and environmental protection (legal aides, naturalists). Thus, the problem is not whether volunteers are needed, but how to get employers and service agencies to use them.

Besides gaining help in solving community problems and filling shortages in service personnel, the volunteer center has more nebulous advantages for the community. The ancient "town-gown" tensions could be reduced, or at least differences more clearly seen, as youths and city residents work together on common problems. Conceivably, the alienation and dissatisfaction of young people would lessen if they too were allowed a stake in the community's attempts to deal with its problems. Those who have worked as volunteers report a greater feeling of involvement and purpose than those who have no outlets for their concerns.

For The Community College And Its Faculty

Having this agency near the campus would offer several advantages for the junior college. First, the scope of the on-campus student personnel programs could be reduced to those services related directly to students, such as financial aids, academic counseling, and student organizations and publications. Time presently spent in telling a student about vocational options and in giving him vocational tests might be better used in allowing the student to experience various jobs and discover for himself where his skills lie.

Second, the volunteer work done through the agency could fulfill the "experience" requirements for the new paraprofessional human service programs that are a growing segment of junior college curricula. These include two-year programs in Child Day-Care and Homemaking, Communications and Transportation, Education (teachers' aides, etc.), Environmental Services, Fire Prevention and Safety, Governmental Service, Law Enforcement and Corrections, Medicine (nurse, dental assistant), Recreation and Parks, and Social Work [3]. Not all of these programs, of course, require internships or practicums, but even there, young men and women could still use the volunteer work as an opportunity to find out more about the field before completing the theoretical and academic preparation. Setting up a good practicum or internship, when part of a college program, has consumed much faculty time and effort in the past. An agency with staff trained in placement, supervision, and counseling of volunteers in a wide range of service experiences could free faculty from work for which they have little preparation and less time.

Third and last, the volunteer agency would be a specific arm of the junior college's "Community Service" commitment without consuming budget and staff time.

IV. Questions About the Proposal for a Volunteer Agency

In addition to describing the advantages and disadvantages of a student volunteer agency, another way to understand the implications of the agency is to answer the following four questions:

1. If some kind of service experience is necessary for the aware and mature adult in this society, why not make it a required part of the junior college general education curriculum?

Put another way, why should the volunteer agency be outside the junior college curriculum and structure? If such experiences in the community have educational benefit for all young people, should not such work be considered part of

their formal education while in school? Stanton [33] presents a case for adopting student internships under junior college general education. Most courses presently taught under the general education rubric, he argues, are sterile and fail to accomplish their purpose, namely, helping young people gain understanding of themselves and their world.

While the idea of broadening the general education concept to include adolescent service experience may be a desirable long-range goal, it would not only be difficult to establish, but would also have several other drawbacks. The difficulty would come partly from faculty resistance to the idea of making general education courses more practical. Many faculty still assume that only vocational courses should be practical and tied to concrete experience, and these they consider non-intellectual. Instructors who have themselves learned by the textbook, formal-lecture method see little reason for new teaching methods and content. While this bias against the practical, specific, and concrete is breaking down, it may be many years before faculty will accept student internships as a vehicle of instruction in general education courses.

A second drawback to incorporating student service work into general education courses immediately is that non-students will continue to be denied such educational experiences. The assumption behind the proposal to expand the curriculum to serve ever more people is that education should continue to occur on campus and in the classroom. By building the volunteer agency off campus and opening it to students and non-students alike, youth could take advantage of this educational experience without enrolling in a course.

Last is a fundamental contradiction between volunteer service and required service as part of course work. Part of the effectiveness of such efforts at community development comes from the fact that they are voluntary. To make such work part of a required general education curriculum before all young people are willing to volunteer would destroy the educational and social benefits of the experience.

By making the voluntary agency independent of the junior college, both students and faculty could profit from the agency's work without the drawbacks of a required curriculum. The agency could become a place where faculty and volunteer staff formulated and tested educational objectives for internships before incorporating them into course work. Research could be done to improve our understanding of the kind of learning that results from service work. The need for volunteer work in our society is clear, but our knowledge of the educational processes that go on during such work is insufficient for us to require such experiences as part of all students' general education. Thus, the opportunities for research and

for trial runs of internships could make the agency a workshop for new curricula and teaching methods for community colleges.

2. Are young people mature enough to handle the responsibility?

This question assumes that students are children, an idea that has kept colleges in the business of providing custodial care. The irony is that students are told they are immature and irresponsible, but are also advised to stay in school until they are ready to take on adult responsibilities, usually synonymous with a paying job. The situation is similar to a colonial government prohibiting self-government for the natives until they demonstrate they are ready for it, but denying them the opportunity to learn it. Similarly, keeping young men or women in school until they have made decisions about vocational plans and interests denies them the experiences necessary for making those decisions.

Many colleges have long functioned in loco parentis, justifying the practice on the assumption that students were not yet adults either legally or physically. Now, of course, the 26th amendment has changed the legal status of students. Keniston [22] gives us new perspectives on the psychological and physiological age of youth:

> Since the turn of the century, the average amount of education received by each student group has increased by approximately one year per decade. Also, the average age for the onset of puberty has decreased by approximately one-fifth of a year per decade. Finally, the average student of any given age today appears to score approximately one standard deviation above the average student of the same age a generation ago on most standardized measures of intellectual performance. . .
>
> Translated into individual terms, this means that the average 16-year-old of today, compared with the 16-year-old of 1920, would probably have reached puberty one year earlier, have received approximately five years more education, and be performing intellectually at the same age level as a 17- or 18-year-old in 1920. Today's high school and college students are about a year more mature physiologically and a year more developed intellectually than their parents were at the same age, but on the other hand, they must defer adult responsibilities, rights, and prerogatives five years longer (p.118).

The segregation of college students from the adult world thus puts an understandable pressure on them if they wish to gain immediate experience and to take on responsibilities before going on for college work.

3. If young people leave school and fail to enroll directly after high school graduation, will they ever receive a college degree?

This question is prompted by the idea that, once a youth leaves school, he will not likely return. At a recent regional conference of junior college deans of instruction, a question arose about the possible effect on junior college admissions of the abolition of the twelfth grade, a proposal put forth by the California Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1971. One dean felt that college should encourage the eleventh graders to start college classes part time so that "we can keep them in the system," but it is no longer true that youth will never return to school if they take time off. Patterns of college attendance are changing rapidly, tending toward continuing education and periods of re-training throughout adult life. One study has concluded that the students who succeed in college have most often: been between the ages of 21-25; been out of high school between two and five years; learned how to work; and had some idea of what kind of work they want to do [7]. There should be less concern with "getting them right after high school" and more for encouraging older people to return to school.

To break the lock step of students from high school to college, however, will require some educators to change their perspectives. High schools will have to prepare the students to live and work better in society as well as to profit from any schooling they might undertake in the indefinite future. Higher education institutions will have to increase the number of criteria for admissions to include students' experiences after high school, rather than depend so much on high school grades and dated test scores as predictors of success in college.

4. Isn't encouraging youth to participate in social-help programs just allowing them to postpone adulthood still longer?

This question implies that participating in volunteer services merely provides another institution to keep young people off the streets or out of the job market. On the contrary, its purpose is to give them a chance to learn about their community while contributing their time and skills to its development.

Thus, the provision of service opportunities for youth assumes a new view of the value and purpose of social services in general. We must give up the old myths

about those who take and provide social service, namely, that "social programs" of any kind are merely handouts for prisoners, alcoholics, and others who are somehow too weak to make good on their own. As noted earlier, the social services now performed in our society, where volunteers could contribute the most, are available to, and often taken for granted by, every member of the society. From birth to grave, we use public schools, public libraries, hospitals, and community centers. Rather than revealing weaknesses by using public services, a person shows he is aware of more options and thus feels greater personal freedom. As one observer has commented, the community must ". . .recognize that our society is no longer individual, open and free, and that individual autonomy is only possible as we develop programs and structures within the structures that encourage it."* If the purpose of social services is to encourage individual autonomy, personal growth, and fulfillment, whoever participates in them, either as a volunteer or a paid employee, is contributing to these goals for himself as well as for others.

Providing an opportunity for everyone--young, middle-aged, or elderly--to contribute in some way to the betterment of his community might do much to alleviate the feeling of estrangement and alienation between individuals and society, for the volunteer then becomes a participant in the process of improving the community rather than a passive receiver of its services. It is important that we start now to establish these opportunities for young people so that they too can begin to feel a part of a community effort and relate their education more closely to the needs of the world in which they live.

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*Letter to the author from Hubert C. Noble, Consultant for World Education Concerns, Division of Christian Education, National Council of Churches, New York City, March 12, 1971.

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